

friendship of
a *Special* kind



contains
Brazilian zest



A novel inspired by *Pride and Prejudice*,
Mr. Darcy and his everlasting appeal

Moira Bianchi

Friendship of a special kind[©]

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Some small quotes from Ms. Austen's masterpiece were reproduced here (always in *italic lettering*) with the intention of reinforcing the timeless value of her work.

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Before adventuring myself on the great experience of writing this novel, I considered it very unoriginal that most books I read were dedicated to the author's family.

Now I realize the amount of support and patience required of those who cohabit an author.

So, I dedicate this book to my first and most loyal fans,

To my husband and son.

I should also thank my dear *Darcy friends* for inspiring and encouraging me in this process.

CHAPTER 1

There is no armor against *fate*.

Men are not prisoners of *fate*, but only prisoners of their own minds.

Fate guides the willing but drags the reluctant.

By the time Elizabeth Bennett was brought to her knees by *fate*, she had already heard several witty quotes about it. Some spirited, some funny and some laden with self-help strategy. Most of them could be applied to her. But none could have prepared her for the abrupt end of her labile marriage, at the young age of thirty.

After that she faced a very tough year and a half, until finally it was time for *Lizzy* to relinquish the *dragging* and allow *fate* to simply *guide* her again. She knew her friends and family would always back her up. What *Lizzy* didn't know was that, fortunately, *fate* was about to bring her William Darcy.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, as well as feared, that *fate* has its twisted ways to dispose of our lives.

The '*Save Elizabeth Bennett Army*' was formed by her longtime friends Charlo Longborn, Dennise Lucas and Hans Gardiner. Her friends' efforts were fruitful including the *hibernation* period in Austria. And whatever happened in Vienna, stayed in Vienna: after a fortnight at his home, *Gardy* did send her back ready to move forward. Everyone sighed in relief, seeing *Lizzy* return to her cheery disposition. *Angry bitchy workaholic crazy-eyed Liz* was *effing* tiring!

Once *Lizzy* was cured from her belligerent period, the *Army*'s next strategy was to get her out of her hidey hole. They needed some excuse for her to come home frequently, to leave Boston in favor of Meryton, her small Massachusetts town. *Charlo* and *Dennie* suggested a Language course to which she readily agreed, choosing Spanish classes. From Monday afternoon to Wednesday morning, *Lizzy* was safe amongst her *dear ones*. What they really wanted was to support her, to keep her close. Secretly, *Lizzy* knew about their scheme, and allowing it was one more step to her recovery.

It was always fun to have a drink after these Spanish classes with *Charlo* and *Dennie*, her best friends since high school. Classmates again, more than fifteen years later, they *had a ball* every week with this whole *language class thing*!

So on that summer night, one week before 4th of July, they were on their way to *Route 66* - the new *texmex* restaurant in town - for some marguerites, Sol beers and *Lizzy*'s favorite: super burritos!

'Just three blocks away, let's walk *girlfriends*!' Chanted *Charlo* when they left the teacher's place. He always made fun of their laziness, and this time he tried to fool the girls into walking five blocks instead of getting their cars.

'Yummy, super burritos!' *Lizzy* mused, while *Charlo* and *Dennie* rolled their eyes.

'You always say that, and end up eating only one - two at best - from the five served on the dish. It's me who's supposed to get fat with the rest of them.' *Charlo* pouted.

'Char, don't *play the victim*! You love to eat our left-overs and still manage to keep your high school figure. My guess is that you purge yourself after we leave you...' *Lizzy* teased him in a mischievous smile.

'He did keep his figure, but not the *rapper's hair cut*! *That* we can make fun of him for!' *Dennie* laughed while *Charlo* acted offended.

'You're in the same jeans from our high school years, *Liz*...' *Charlo* disdained, eying *Lizzy*'s trim waist.

'Isn't this great, *girlfriend*?' *Lizzy* said affectedly, slapping her hump and giggling with *Dennie*.

'Shut up you two, stop quoting me! And don't dare to *play the gossipers* on me, now of all times, when finally there's a good man heading my way and...' *Charlo* bit his lip, guilty.

'Oh no, *Dennie*, he's taking us to another *meet and greet* the Internet gay freak...' *Lizzy* whined.

'Yeah *Liz*.' *Dennie* commiserated. 'That's what we get for still being friends with the weird skinny English gay boy since...'

Both *Liz* and *Charlo* yelled '*Don't!*' and there came the raucous laughter that had identified the trio since late 1980's, when the frightened English boy arrived at the American small town with his transferred father, terrified of being a victim of bullying. Meeting and falling in love at first sight with the blond-dyed-red willowy *Dennise* and the brunette beauty *Elizabeth* was like finding home. His

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father welcomed the friendship with relieve, since now his pride and joy (and obviously discovering himself gay) baby boy was far from the dangerous drug addict friends. Meryton meant rescue for both of them. Gradually Mr. Longbourn befriended the Bennetts and the Lucases, establishing a new life for both.

‘Anyway...’ Dennie dried her eyes from the laughing tears, ‘we are in better shape *now* than when we graduated college.’

‘Yeah...’ Mused Lizzy. ‘Beer filled college years had their way on us. But one must acknowledge the benefits of surviving a major *crash*, loosing appetite and *joie de vivre*...’

Dennie and Charlo exchanged *THE* look that Lizzy pretended not to notice, as always. They didn’t like her stubbornness in continuing to mention her *hell*, but she did it anyway. For them, she was overburdening herself but it still felt like a catharsis to her.

‘Ok *Nostalgia Queens*, here we are: Route 66, the new *texmex* in town! Didn’t I tell you? Really close from señorita *Austena*’s. Isn’t it cool?’

It was. With its low Mexican fencepost, lots of cactus around nicely placed candle lighted garden tables, cute porch and regular tables inside the renovated old house. In winter they probably would need a good make over but now it was perfect.

As soon as they arrived, Charlo got into his *gay scan mode* and the girls knew better than to interrupt it. So they seated on the low fence like the other few people waiting tables by the sidewalk, and ordered *Sol beers* from the frantic waiter. Charlo soon entered the garden looking for his date, leaving them behind.

That’s when Darcy saw Lizzy.

‘Hot ass!’ William Darcy mumbled on the ring seam of his *Sol* beer bottle. He zeroed instantly on her delectable figure and let his Seattle longtime friends’ empty banter wash over him. Cozy in a group of eight men, Darcy was relaxed, laid-back; enjoying an atmosphere completely different from his uptight worldliness. He watched Lizzy attentively, flying away in his thoughts, all through his bottle.

Darcy’s younger brother, Richard, elbowed him. ‘Look at what Thorny found fishing the net this time. Unlike his extravagant friends, this one could pass for one of us.’

Darcy nodded. ‘Won’t last. Since college he prefers the limelights.’

Charles Bingley, Bings for short, leaned on the table from the opposite side: ‘So that’s why we’re spending our first holiday together since high school here in Meryton! Hope it works out.’

Darcy snorted and took a gulp, only to notice that he’d emptied yet another bottle. ‘These damn things are growing smaller. Should buy some shares from this company and start making money instead of wasting on it.’ He mumbled. Barely cured from a private hell of his own, Darcy was doing his best to keep himself from his taciturn disposition, but it wasn’t easy. He needed a push.

He raised his arm to call the frantic waiter’s attention just as Lizzy twisted without getting up from the fence where she was perched to do the same, and their eyes met.

‘*Mmm, a good drinker. Already needs a refill.*’ He mused to himself.

Tilting his head to the side, he signaled with his raised hand that she should take the turn and order before him. She smiled, turned around and did order.

‘Add fine eyes. This vacation could be interesting after all.’ Darcy said, admiring her from afar.

‘What, Will?’ Ricky asked.

‘Nothing. Forget it.’ Darcy said, nonchalantly.

John J Thornton, III -*Thorny* for his friends- spotted Charlo coming towards them and waved. After a bear hug, he introduced Charlo to the men table explaining that they were friends since *prep school*, a tight group that never managed to spend time together ever since, until now. Some just nodded, some rose and shook hands but all in all everyone was friendly. It’s been decades since the group of rich men made peace with one of them being gay.

Then Charlo called out Lizzy and Dennie, exactly when they were picking up their refills from the waiter.

Darcy noticed Lizzy’s reaction and quick recovery. ‘*Surprised?... Bashful? Why?*’ He thought.

‘Let me introduce you to my dear girlfriends...’ Charlo said, holding the girls proudly by their waists. ‘Elizabeth – Liz, I mean, Lizzy - and Dennise - Dennie. We’re close friends since high school too!’ Charlo enthused. The Seattle guys greeted the ladies very gentlemanly, being careful not to do it eagerly – both the married and the single ones were beware of *country chits*.

While Charlo and Thorny talked coincidences as if they haven't done *on line* several times before, Dennie fought the prehistoric sting of not having a private pet name from Charlo as *Liz* did. Bingley hurried to make small talk with these *angels* because although he was sure Jane, his girlfriend for eight years now was his private angel and haven, he was not blind to her kin.

At this same moment, the busy waiter arrived with another *Sol* for Darcy, gesticulating to the side walk. Confused, he looked around until he found Lizzy and pointed at her. She blushed and tilted her head to Darcy, smiling.

Only at that Darcy got up and came closer to greet the ladies, intrigued. After he introduced himself, and before Lizzy got uncomfortable with him commenting on the beer, she explained herself.

'You gave me a chance to get the waiter's attention and that's gold today! It was very kind of you, so I'm repaying!' She said congenially, disguising her embarrassment.

He laughed a good nice laugh.

"Wow, *stud material!*" Lizzy thought, smiling back at him; Dennie and Bingley already forgotten.

'Thank you. That's the first time a woman bought me drinks. May I settle up?' Darcy asked, amused.

'No!' Lizzy said, laughing.

Darcy raised his brows in surprise.

'If I let you do it, my achievement would be lost! Let me continue as a *trend setter*. You *should* have been getting lots of drinks and phone numbers with these gorgeous eyes!' Lizzy sipped her bottle, flirting innocently just for fun.

'Thank you. I don't even know how to answer; this is really a first for me.' Darcy said, smiling and blushing. 'At least allow me to return the compliment. Your eyes certainly changed my night, for the best.' He flirted back, for profit.

Lizzy smiled brightly at him and broke eye contact.

"*A push just came to a shove.*" Darcy thought. He arranged for a chair to squeeze Lizzy in their table, securing her between him and Ricky; while Bingley got Dennie a chair beside him and in front of them.

But that was all the flirting Darcy got. Lizzy didn't make any move on him whatsoever during the whole time she stayed with them. It wasn't much anyway, only enough for one more *Sol* and the burritos dish which they shared. Turned out that Darcy could eat three super burritos!

Well, given the choice, he wouldn't eat at all while drinking but who could resist those eyes, and biting lips?

Lizzy helped Darcy when the sauce ran down his arm due to the overflowing filling, and they shared camaraderie of being like toddlers having popsicles. She laughed and shared embarrassing stories about the 90's with Dennie, Ricky and Bingley, but not one single flirtatious glance his way.

He, on his part, stole several. He stared. Evaluated. Liked. But let her chat to others, he was a man of few words to strangers anyway.

Suddenly she rose, gave Dennie some cash and said warm goodbyes. All present at the table protested saying the night was young but she didn't change her mind, said she would walk home and left.

Darcy felt dejected, but he couldn't figure out why.

'Did we say something wrong? Better, did Richard offend her with his raunchiness?' Bingley asked half chuckling as soon as she left, to the amusement of the Seattle friends.

'Shucks! I didn't say anything, didn't even hit her with the *Fitzwilliam charm...*' Ricky said in his defense and jumped the gun, asking Lizzy's friends: 'Guys, does she need lots of *beauty sleep*? Doesn't look like!'

Dennie and Charlo exchanged *THE* look.

'Yes. No! Well, she's heading back to Boston tomorrow morning so she needs rest...' Dennie said. 'Not that it concerns you.' Dennie added, feeling protective of Lizzy in spite of the compliment.

Ricky flinched, but Dennie's cut didn't stop him from exchanging flirts with her.

'But she's coming back soon, right? She'll be on next Sunday's barbecue, right *Char?*' Thorny asked, concerned about the success of his 4th of July crazy party.

Dennie raised her brows.

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‘I haven’t told them yet, *Thor*.’ Charlo said, apologetically. ‘Dennie, the guys are throwing a barbecue next Sunday at Netherfield farm where they’re staying. The local gentry’s invited, us included. Do you think Liz would be up to it?’ He asked her affectionately.

‘Liz? Lizzy?’ Darcy joined the conversation.

Charlo got puffy. ‘*Liz* is just for me. And Dennie.’

Dennie shook her head.

‘I don’t know, Charlo. We can try. I’ll ask her to come Sunday morning instead of Monday next week.’ To the rest of the men she added: ‘She spends half the week here, half in Boston.’ To the still puzzled looks round the table she shrugged and sipped her beer.

Charlo, making an effort to be as *fly* as he could, measuring his words and annoyance at the need to explain anything at all, told Thorn: ‘She’s a bit skittish, she has been through a few rough patches and we like to keep her close. But she’s cool now.’

‘And beautiful.’ Darcy muttered before he could think, his friends chuckled but didn’t comment.

Then, as the conversation moved to barbecue and vacations, Dennie studied Darcy, thinking that he actually might be what Lizzy needed for an interlude. Handsome, polite and from another world completely.

Darcy made a mental note to make sure Thorn invited and succeeded in bringing Lizzy’s fine eyes back to him; as well as finding out more about her.

The fact that the stoic Darcy manifested interest on the *online discreet* boyfriend’s girlfriend was taken with amusement by his friends, the Seattle men. Not that he was a womanizer or ever had any trouble wooing his women, but after the whole *dragon* affair, he needed a cool foxy woman like this Lizzy seemed to be. Or Liz. Whatever she may be called.

What amused them most was that since they started this trip, Darcy had let loose, arriving at the Seattle airport holding a beer and quoting a famous hangover movie. Now; hook, line and sinker for this good looking brunette.

These vacations may actually be better than imagined.

This book is available for purchase on [ebook](#), [kindle](#) and [paperback](#).

Except for the catastrophic fishing expedition Louis de Bourg insisted on, this vacation at Meryton was a very relaxing time for the Seattle friends. Being together like teenagers after more than twenty years without their women, nor relatives, nor work load was exhilarating. A time when they could be themselves and make fun of one another just like the carefree heirs they were at school.

From said fishing trip to the lake fifty minutes from Netherfield farm and described by the *Fish and Hound* magazine as “fully stocked annually”, they only brought mosquito bites and a massive hangover. It seemed that the perennial fish community was on vacations somewhere else or maybe, Ricky’s loud jokes kept them away.

Without much activity that involved scales, they drank all the booze they carried. Sleeping in tents by the lakeside, they kept a fire in hopes of protecting their legs from the mosquitoes. That was also useful because they could heat canned sausages and beans; the only thing there was to eat.

For the aloof Darcy, it was especially excruciating since the guys tricked him into admitting he *noticed* the beautiful brunette with fine eyes and enticing body while they were talking about the variety of attractive women at this corner of the East Coast. A group of rich men – most of them single – would certainly gather a lot of attention from such a confined society, surely this was also a truth universally acknowledged.

That fishing trip, to Darcy, also meant he lost a chance to meet *beautiful Lizzy* again. As her cut-throat red haired friend said that night, she had this weird schedule where she only stayed at Meryton during the beginning of the week. As they returned to Netherfield farm Tuesday night, he had lost her.

“*Damn*.” He thought. He truly wouldn’t mind having a *roll in the hay* with her.

Sunday morning, Darcy was on his toes. People were streaming in, beer was cold, plenty of drinks and still no confirmation that Lizzy was coming. “*Lots of help her friends were*.” He regretted.

He didn’t know that her friends were trying hard through Facebook, texting, phone and mail. They thought Lizzy needed some party back in her system and also some of the *Hunk* who was asking for her. She was still reticent but finally agreed to arrive Sunday morning instead of Monday as usual.

Some three hours later, the party was in full swing when Darcy saw Thorn talking *tête à tête* with Charlo - his puppy since the other Tuesday - and Dennie, the red head friend. “*Mmm, interesting.*” He thought.

As he was approaching, intent on gauging the situation, Thorn called him over.

‘Will, whose car is not blocked at the parking lot?’

Darcy greeted Charlo and Dennie and while trying to remember, he asked: ‘What do you need?’

‘It’s Lizzy, Will.’ Dennie said, observing him perk up. ‘She didn’t drive home this week as usual...’ she rolled her eyes, Charlo mirrored; ‘and her younger sister is driving her here. But *Kitty* is on her way to another party with an *odious* friend...’ both Charlo and Dennie twisted their noses at the mentioning of Kitty’s friend; ‘and can’t drive her down the lane from the road. Lizzy needs a pick up. My car is blocked, I’d need to move at least fifteen cars to go get her, and she’s almost here.’

Darcy chanted to himself: “*mine, mine, mine!*” But only said: ‘I’ll do it, no problem.’ And he jogged out before anyone could protest or ask if his car was free, by any chance.

Once out of their flight from the West Coast, after some arguing about the possibility of renting just two cars, the Seattle men decided to rent as each wished. There was too much testosterone for eight guys to fit into two cars anyway. So Darcy rented the same luxury midsize SUV he owned at home saying that he already spent time choosing a car six months ago; Thorn got a convertible to ‘*enjoy the sun, boys!*’; Bing got a more plausible small pickup truck advising Bourg to do the same. So now they always went everywhere in a parade: four cars tailing each other and sometimes fighting for the pole position. When Bingley told Jane this over the phone, even thought she was extremely cordial, she had to admonish: ‘You are so like teenagers!’ She groaned delicately. ‘Grow up like your wallets did!’

Charlo, Thorn and Dennie looked at each other, amused at Darcy’s reaction. When Dennie picked up her cell to let Lizzy know that ‘*The Hunk*’ was on his way to her rescue, Charlo held her hand.

‘Don’t you dare! Surprise makes the thrill!’ He enthused.

‘And harder to avoid, huh?’ Dennie added in a sly smile.

Will had to work his way through the crowded party twice, avoiding the attempts of chat from the country chits to get Bourg’s keys, as his was the free car at the parking lot. It was some twenty minutes later when he finally managed to fly the small pickup down the lane, cursing its lack of class to impress Lizzy.

When he emerged from the tall grass framing Netherfield’s French-like portico, he had a glorious view. Lizzy was leaning against the car in a lovely sun dress, a hint of sheer, flowery, short, luxurious neck line, aviator’s sun glasses, peep toe sandals, hair loose.

‘Wow!’ he said alone in the car.

Darcy parked behind her sister’s car on the other side of the road and got out. Inside the car with its doors opened, seated with their bodies leaning outside, there were two girls: one looked very much like Lizzy only a bit... crude to his liking. Lizzy herself always thought Kitty wore too much make up, and leather shorts were dispensable in this weather. The other girl was totally over the top.

When she saw him, Lizzy pushed away from the car where she was leaning against and smiled a beautiful smile.

‘Those two will pay for this.’ She muttered to herself. To him she said a cheery ‘Hi! *Will*, right? Are you my knight in shining engine?’

He laughed and unleashed all the power in his smile on her. ‘It’s me. Ready to be rescued, fair lady? The *borrachos* are in full swing already!’

‘¡Ah Señor, por supuesto! Gracias! Esta es mi hermana Kitty y su amiga Lydia.’

Storing his meager Spanish, Darcy greeted the girls noticing the hungry eyes on him. He had to check Lizzy’s, but he only found himself reflected on her aviator lens. “*I’m sure her fine eyes are not looking at me this blunt.*” He comforted himself.

Lizzy kissed her sister goodbye and climbed into Bourg’s car with Darcy. As soon as Kitty moved ahead, he crossed the road to enter the farm portico.

‘So Will, how come I ended up being your good action for the day?’ Lizzy asked in an unpretentious smile, almost sure it was going be a simple “*Your friends told me to*”. She held her hair off her eyes with the sunglasses on top of her head.

‘Your friends’ car got blocked on the parking lot and they asked for my help. Luckily Bourg had the foresight to park his rental near the kitchen, at the other side of the backyard. As he was busy ... errr... *entertaining* some ladies, I got his keys.’

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‘And how come you were free?’ Lizzy asked, raising one perfectly designed brow. “*Such a handsome man, alone in a party full of women?*”

‘Huh?’ Darcy asked, surprised.

‘I mean, you were not *entertaining*...’

He laughed. ‘No, I was asked to cook some *pasta a la putanesca*, so I’m mostly at the kitchen. Until now.’

“Mmmm,” She thought. “*Convenient... And Dennie and Charlo had to go ask for his help? Out of all the people at this darn party?*”

‘And the patroness ordering your cooking won’t miss you?’ Lizzy was still not convinced that this was not a plot from her friends insisting to urge her towards this gorgeous guy.

‘Thorny? Hardly. His parties are always his reflex, a little crazed as you may have noticed, with all kinds of food no matter what the party is about, gathering *all kinds* of people. Anyway, he’s joined by the hips with your friend anyway.’ He said and blushed furiously noticing his faux pas.

It took her three seconds to understand why he turned silent and his handsome face went red. ‘Oh!’ She laughed heartily.

He chuckled, embarrassed. ‘Sorry. I didn’t mean to be rude. I apologize.’

‘No problem, Will. Char would love the joke. And your blush is cute.’ She was still laughing.

Another blush for Darcy.

‘It’s you.’ He said impetuously.

She turned to him with a puzzled face, sobering up.

‘You make me feel comfortable. At ease. I’m usually more careful with what I say.’

‘Me or beer?’ She asked with an adorably sexy raised eyebrow.

‘Both.’ Darcy admitted, flirting. He had to chuckle, she was lovely.

She laughed again.

‘That’s a great compliment, you hardly met me!’ Lizzy said, still laughing. ‘And how many beers did you have already, by the way?’ She asked sarcastically.

‘Some, but it’s mostly you.’ He turned to look at her, devastating smile hitting her full force.

“*Oops, what’s this?*” She thought. “*A ‘moment’? Is he flirting, or is the beer flirting with me? Gulp. Tough up Elizabeth. He’s a looker, but you can win a stare contest!*”

‘You’re quite a looker, you know that, right?’ she flirted back.

‘I’ve been told.’ Darcy admitted, holding his smile and looking back at the road.

‘By your mirror?’ Lizzy teased.

He chuckled. ‘That way you make me sound like a conceited fool doing his best to win a country chit’s favor.’

‘Ouch!’ she said and gamely flinched away from him.

He startled and stepped on the breaks.

‘Damn, did I offend you? Fuck. Sorry, damn. See? At ease. Carefree.’ He reached for her hand and brought it to his lips. ‘Sorry. Don’t be offended.’ Darcy said kissing her hand. He didn’t know what was going on in his mind, letting anything get away from his mouth, cursing in front of her... “*Damn!*” He thought.

‘Now I’m offended! First you only made a joke, now you are stating I’m a *country chit*!’ she laughed.

He breathed a sigh of relief recognizing her jest, kissed her hand once more and released it, deciding that he loved the sound of her voice and put the car on drive once again.

‘Do you always put your feet in your mouth?’ Lizzy asked, smiling. She was actually having fun.

‘No.’ Darcy answered, still cursing himself for his loose tongue.

‘So it’s just for me?’ Lizzy asked, amused.

‘Yes.’ He said.

‘Mmm, to pay back the drink I offered you the other day?’

‘Yes!’ A rich laugh.

‘Thanks!’ Lizzy laughed.

‘My pleasure.’ “*That I hope you’ll be sharing sometime soon.*” He thought.

‘But from now on you’ll only talk to me in monosyllables?’ She asked.

‘Yes.’ He nodded.

‘Wise choice!’ Lizzy approved.

‘Thanks.’ He chuckled.

It was in this happy mood that arrived at the frenzied barbecue party, to the amused eyes of his friends and hopeful glance of hers.

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CHAPTER 2

‘Hi Liz! Look at you all flowery, flowingly and flushed!’ Dennie teased, already guessing from Lizzy’s face that she was displeased.

‘Easy Dennise. You’re on my list. You too, you *dingbat*! Thanks for *Mr. Hunk*.’ Lizzy said to Dennie and Charlo as she came closer, after Darcy showed her where they were and left.

‘Don’t play *The damsel*, Liz! He’s gorgeous and has been taking trouble to get you here, also to conceal his efforts, which is *kinda* cute.’ Charlo gushed. ‘And he’s not *Mr. Hunk*. He’s Mr. Darcy. William Darcy. Thorn told me all about the *snubbing nob*! Loaded. Like heaps of money.’

Lizzy shrugged. ‘Like I care.’

‘Aww, please Liz.’ Dennie had no patience anymore for Lizzy’s ‘*Money doesn’t buy happiness*’ routine.

‘I’m not looking for a husband, *mother*. I mean, Dennie.’ Lizzy spat the words petulantly.

Dennise blew her a raspberry.

‘*Sweetie*, I doubt he’s looking for a *husband* either. What am I saying? I know he’s not!’ Charlo laughed with all the booze in his system. ‘I doubt he’s looking for a *wife*. Maybe a shag...’

‘Oh please...’ Lizzy snorted. ‘*A guy that gorgeous, me, a casual encounter? Come on!*’ She snorted to herself.

‘Liz, just think’ Charlo tried to insist but then someone started a huge riot by the pool and their attention was lost elsewhere. Soon they were laughing with their Meryton friends and the *Hunk* subject died, for the moment.

Will had Lizzy on his line of sight all the while as he observed the party going on; interested in how easy going she was with everybody and musing about how much it made his reserved side uncomfortable.

‘She must have known most of these people all her life, Will.’ Bingley said over his shoulder.

‘Yeah, probably. And why do I care, Bings?’

Bingley, the eternal romantic, his longtime friend, actually Ricky’s classmate, sighed dramatically. ‘Cupid’s been busy, I’d say.’ And smiled.

Will choked on his beer and turned the *Darcy stare* at Bingley. ‘Man, either you marry Jayjay and fill her with babies to occupy your time or you better leave her. You’re turning into her!’

Jane Paz Phillips was an adorable fierce fair beauty that never had a strand of hair out of place in her life. Also from Seattle, Jane met the guys during one of the annual balls held to introduce the girls from her *prep school* to the boys on theirs. Jane joined their group of friends, instantly becoming a *Charles’ Angel* but made Bingley work for years before giving him an actual date. She used to tell Darcy that once she tasted the *Bing flavor*, she was sure to be addicted, and as Darcy rolled his eyes at her romanticism, she just tapped his shoulder and said: ‘One day Cherry chocolate will not taste like vanilla to you, friend. It’ll taste like it’s supposed to.’

‘*Darce*, my *Angel* is right. You need some quality company.’

‘When have I become a discussion topic between you two?’ Darcy asked, annoyed.

Bingley went pensive and took a gulp of his bottle. ‘Mmmm, two years ago?’

Darcy sighed and shut up. Now was not the time to dwell on his failings.

After some minutes he decided to try his luck. ‘Let the chips fall where they may.’ Darcy headed Lizzy’s way, maneuvering through the crowd over Bingley’s cheers.

‘Oh hi, Will! Were you lost? Hardly saw you since we got here.’ Lizzy asked him in a smile when he reached her, while Dennie snickered.

‘Been busy.’ ‘*Observing you. Were you keeping an eye on me too? Hardly saw me...*’ He mused.

‘*Entertaining* some ladies?’ Lizzy asked, raising an eyebrow. Somehow she forgot about the friends she was talking to.

‘No!’ Darcy shook his head and raised his brows.

‘Still monosyllables?’ She asked, smiling.

He smiled back. ‘*What a gorgeous man, dimples! Char’s right.*’ She thought.

‘No. But don’t get offended by anything I might say. Want to taste my pasta?’ and he waggled his brows.

She laughed, that’s what he was aiming for, a rich laugh.

‘Sure! Show me what you’ve got!’

Lizzy found the spacious old farm house's kitchen in full action. Mrs. Hill, her old school cook was there acting like a general, ordering four people around to make sure there was plenty of food and drinks for everybody.

'Little *Lizzy busy!* I was wondering when you'd show up here at these crazy boys' party! Everyone else is here, the whole town it seems!' Mrs. Hill said, gesticulating happily.

'Hi Mrs. *Hilly!* Now I know why this barbecue is such a success!' Lizzy beamed, comforted by the known woman's presence.

'Hmpf! Did you know that they even cook? I hardly have any work here. You should try Mr. Will's pasta. I'm off to get some herbs from the garden. They're running out of seasoning on the grill again. Come Josh, get busy boy!'

'Hi Lizzy!' Said Joshua, Mrs. Hill teenage son, as he passed her by, followed by the other helpers who were on their way to some chore somewhere. She waved back with a smile.

'You seem to know everybody around here, huh?' Darcy asked her with an arch smile. Actually he was getting really insecure with how outgoing she was, so different from him. On the way through the crowded party to the kitchen they stopped several times for her to greet and be greeted by a lot of people. And to everyone she had a warm hello, warmer for some, he noticed.

'Born here, school here.' She shrugged. 'Mrs. Hill was my kindergarten and junior high cook. I was always expecting meat loaf day! Have you tried hers?' Lizzy asked him.

'Actually yes, it's good. She's been of great help. Without her housekeeping we would be just feeding on alcohol, and wouldn't have anything clean to wear.' Darcy said, getting busy near the gigantic stove.

'Not good.' Lizzy shook her head.

'Nope. Bad hangovers.' Darcy nodded, smiling.

She laughed. 'I bet!'

Lizzy settled on the counter with her legs swinging, gladly watching him and after some stirring, he brought her a spoon of his *putanesca* sauce.

'Here, taste this.'

'Mmmm, wow!' Lizzy marveled, licking her lips.

His face lighted up with a smile that got her gasping for air. Or was it the *Calabrese* pepper?

'Do you like it?' Darcy asked hopefully.

'Yes! Did you do it yourself?' She smiled, tapping her lips with a paper napkin she found on the counter.

'Yes, I learned it a few years ago when traveling through Italy. Here, open wide.' He said, offering her a bit more, now adding some penne on the spoon.

She had to laugh. He blushed. But he got close enough to stand between her legs as he fed her, careful not to spill on her sun dress.

'Oh my, perfect!' She said with her eyes closed. He licked his lips. She opened her eyes and held her breath.

It was an awkward moment before some noise brought them back to Earth, and Will took a step back.

'Will, it's very good. Bad for one's figure though. Let's serve it?' She said trying to break the mood.

'Mrs. Hill thinks it'll be better to serve it later.' Darcy said, trying to make his mind work again.

"*Oh oh! Lizzy, try another escape. Fast.*" Lizzy urged herself.

'Need a refill. Do you want another beer?' Lizzy said, nervously eying her bottle on the counter beside her. At this moment, Josh Hill entered the kitchen and offered to show her where the chilled ones were.

She jumped from the counter and followed the boy outside before Darcy could say *Mississippi*. Frustrated, he ruffled his hair and decided to go to his room and take a shower to chill his body as well as his mind.

Lizzy was at the back porch, pacing and trying to think. Hard. "*What the heck?*" She repeated to herself.

This '*oh so handsome*' man was all over her, and she was what? Afraid? Missish? Prude? Cautious? She refused to dread anymore. Be angry too. She decided that in Vienna some time ago. Gardy had told her very sternly: '*Fear and anger don't fit you, Schätzchen.*' Prude? Char would laugh

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at that. She chuckled too. *"That's the weight of old age: Lizzy a prude!"* Thirty two already. Too grown up for a missish fit, already a widow." Cautious. That must be it, caution, Lizzy finally reasoned.

Before she noticed, her third beer was gone and she needed to visit the bathroom. Entering through the kitchen from the back porch where she had been hiding for the last twenty minutes or so, she found a servants door that led to the private quarters. She opened a door to the right: linen closet, huge. Another door: brown bedroom also huge. This room she remembered vaguely from previous visits to Netherfield farm, as it had been rented for parties for many summers. She tried to concentrate through her beered mind and remember where the *aqua* bathroom was. She remembered it being huge, opened to the corridor and with water lilies floor tiles.

'Left or right, Lizzy? Think.' She muttered under her voice.

Just as Darcy was leaving his bedroom she tried the door beside his, and before she could get Ricky in a private situation, he called out to her.

'Hey señorita, looking for something?' *"Or someone? Ricky? No fucking way."* Darcy thought.

'Will!' She jumped. 'You look...' *gorgeous, sexy, hunkish*, her dazed mind searched for words. Wet hair, clean white v neck t-shirt, delicious five o'clock shadow and smelling like soap: such an eye candy. '...Like you're just out of the shower!' She finally blurted.

'That's because I am. You're looking for...?' He asked, a bit suspicious.

'The bathroom. I'm trying to remember where the *aqua* one is.' Lizzy said, biting her lips and cursing her luck.

'You've been here before?' Darcy was surprised.

'Yes. Every other summer there's a party here. School dance, weddings, birthdays... Can you help me?' Her situation was becoming serious; soon she would be shifting from foot to foot to manage her bladder.

'I see.' He nodded. 'Not with the *waterish* whatever.' He answered, again captured by her presence.

'*Aqua*.' She corrected frowning. She really needed to visit the restroom, as quickly as possible.

'Here, use mine.' He opened the door to the green room. Spacious and sunny, it faced the east side of the property, away from the pool and all the social noise.

'I'll take that. Thanks a bunch!' She said gratefully.

Entering the room, she was greeted with a perfectly organized place: suitcase arranged on its stool by the side wall, clothes perfectly folded on top of the dresser-probably the clean ones Mrs. Hill brought him this morning- and it all smelled like... Sandal wood.

'The door by the window.' He pointed the way, as she took a few moments looking around.

She dove right to it and Darcy was left with a difficult choice: *try* or not to *try*? He was interested in her since she had bought him a beer the other Tuesday. It was a while since he'd been this interested in someone, if ever with this intensity. He even had nice naughty dreams about her. After he ended the Caroline affair –*Cardragon* as she was named amongst his friends- he'd seen one or two women, all previous girlfriends, and all casual encounters. Lizzy was new, fresh, lovely, inadvertently sexy. *"Maybe that's what caught me, she's not over me."* He mused. And then he thought about the sight of her naked thighs when she dramatically pretended to be offended by his *country chit* comment, recoiling and accidentally letting her dress ride up. He felt his groin twitch. *"Easy choice, really."*

Lizzy was trying to think over her muddled brain and search for reasons to escape this gorgeous man. *"His bedroom. His room. The green room. Did he have to be in the green room?"* She washed her face, retouched the earthy eyeliner she always wore during the day while remembering her childhood dream of copying cousin Anne's wedding at Netherfield. It took her years to understand Cousin Anne's dreamy looks and sighs regarding her honeymoon night at the green room. *"Make up retouched, bladder empty, confident look. Time to face the lion, Lizzy. Let the chips fall where they may!"* She coaxed herself.

When she left the bathroom, he was casually leaning against the open window frowning over his smart phone. *"Damn, does everything conspire to make him look hot? Stop shining on his head, Sun!"* She thought.

'Mmm, thanks. Three beers are my limit.' Lizzy said, embarrassed.

He looked up and smiled broadly. 'Three beers?'

'Yeah. Both for my bladder and mind. Already finding everything very funny.' She smiled.

He kept his killer smile in place.

'Mmmm... my cousin used this room as a dressing room on her wedding day. She let me get dressed here too. I was her flower girl.' Lizzy had to continue talking to keep sane, or to keep her from doing something foolish. She could have escaped, but she didn't.

'How old where you?' Darcy was sure she made a lovely flower girl.

'Six. No, seven I guess.' Lizzy said eying the room and letting the memories take over.

'Does it look the same?' His smile was relaxed, sexy. Her legs where pure jelly.

'I'm afraid so!' She laughed and took a step towards the dresser to check the mirror where Anne stared at her own hair with flowers for what Lizzy's seven year old impatience felt like hours. When she tripped over the ivy patterned rug, Darcy dove and caught her arm to steady her.

'Whoa, are you ok Lizzy? You were in there for a long time.' Darcy asked, actually concerned.

She looked up at his face, locked eyes and answered candidly: 'I was trying to find courage.'

Lizzy was really trying not to think at all, or else she would never be here with this man.

He turned serious and his eyes seem to burn on hers. It didn't matter why she thought she needed courage; to Darcy all that mattered was how close she was. 'I hope you've found it.' And he leaned forward to kiss her.

A full kiss, open mouth, tasty, hungry. Both of them were thirsty, and enjoyed it once, twice. He maneuvered her to the window sill and seated her there, repeating the kitchen scenario. She snuggled close to him, leaning on his chest as she had to stretch to match his height.

She was perfect. Soft, firm, fragrant, sexy.

He was athletic, strong, demanding. *'Perfect kiss. So different. So perfect.'* Lizzy thought vaguely.

'Will, I want to ask you something.' She said when he finally left her lips.

'Anything.' He breathed down her neck. His hands were all over her, octopus like.

'Shave.' She said.

'Huh?' He reluctantly left her neck to look at her face, as she bashfully explained.

'Please?' She asked. 'Beard rash. I think your five o'clock is very – *very, very* - sexy, but I would have to leave the party hooded and through the back door or else everybody would read in my face that we've *entertained* each other.' Her face was already pinkish around her lips.

He chuckled. 'Won't you flee?'

'Don't let me if I try.' Lizzy was serious.

'I won't let you. Ok. Help me; I want to keep an eye on you. Don't want to take chances.' Darcy was amused.

'Ok.' She breathed on his lips.

He kissed her fully and peppered her with small pecks before his mind could convince his body to unglue itself from hers. Their groins made a good case trying to keep locked together.

Will caught her by the hand and got busy on the bathroom vanity.

'I'll use the electric shaver. Give me a minute.'

'Not going anywhere.' Lizzy said and hid from the mirror behind his back, embracing his waist. She was afraid of what she'd see if she looked at herself. *"Cheater? Fake? Unpretty little chit?"*

So, she buried her nose on his broad back and sneaked her hand inside his t-shirt. He trembled and hit full speed on the shaver. *"Fuck, go faster little piece of shit. I should have shaved this morning. Fuck."*

'You smell so good...' She said, kissing his back. His groin responded: *"You've got to see how good I taste, my Darling."* He groaned as an answer to her, afraid to let his south head speak over his north.

To help her, he stopped shaving just enough time to get rid of his t-shirt, but the sight of her deep chocolate colored short manicured nails almost broke him. It was all he could do to restart shaving at lightning speed. It was also a major problem, seeing and feeling her hands roaming his stomach. He might cut his nose off if he had chosen a razor. To help, he tried to remember hi ex's claw like nails. It cooled his body long enough to finish, wash his face, dry it and turn to her.

Lizzy's long hair was lightly disheveled where his hands held her a few minutes ago and that made him proud. *"I did that!"* He leaned on the vanity and brought her close.

'Try it. See if it pleases you.' Darcy asked sexily.

'Don't have to. You know it does, you are gorgeous with or without a beard.' She murmured.

'Try it anyway.' Darcy dove for her lips once again.

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And the kisses resumed calmer now, savoring each other for long moments. Long enough for Lizzy to start fearing for her resolution. So she unglued their bodies to snake her hands between them and reach his cargo shorts' waist. It was a pity to put some air between them but the sharp intake of breath he took sent a wet shock down her body.

In one swift moment he took her small mailman pouch over her shoulder and reached for the hem of her dress. The feel of his hands ridding down her waist and up her thighs was exhilarating.

'I could get addicted to these thighs.' He said on her mouth.

'I'll thank my Pilates instructor.' She playfully answered between small kisses on the sides of his mouth. 'How many buttons do these shorts have?'

He chuckled and moaned at the same time as she gave up on them and fondled him over the fabric. 'Way too many.' He mumbled getting to her panties.

"*Nothing fancy.*" He concluded after a brief blind investigation. "*She wasn't planning this. Or she's this simple. Hot.*"

She took her dress over her head and he could admire her body. Natural, hanging the right places, no signs of artificial implants, full breasts that he grabbed as soon as his damn buttons were opened and the shorts dropped to the floor. Quickly he stepped on his tennis shoes and kicked them aside.

'I'll definitely need a detox over these.' And his hands were busy on her breasts.

She moaned long and avid for more reached behind her intent on unclasping her bra, allowing Darcy to dive in. The sight of *this* gorgeous man's mouth and hand on her boobs was like seeing an alien in sunglasses. "*Is this me? Am I really feeling this good? Being this raucous?*" She thought.

Still cowering from the mirror she tugged on his humid curls and whispered 'Bed?' When he opened his eyes.

He was so crazed with the sight her basic lingerie, full breasts with wine disks and sweet cherry that he couldn't find words to say a meager 'Yes.' So he let go of her boob, raked his hands down her waist to rest under her bottom, forcefully grinded their groins together until she opened her legs and lifted her astride him. Then with some difficulty not to let her fall he caressed one leg, then the other, until he reached her calf and unhook her sandals.

When he took her to bed they were both clad in panties and briefs only, barefoot and completely aroused.

By the bed, she remembered the door and he went to lock it. Lizzy *had to* lean on her arms to enjoy the view of this *Adonis* striding through the *green room* towards her in strained boxer briefs.

'Stop!' She said with one hand palm up and an arch smile that matched her raised left eyebrow. He licked his lips and obeyed. 'I want to watch you.' She said.

He took a step forward: 'I'm better at a closer distance.' He said, enjoying the game.

'No! I want to look at you... Take off these delicious briefs.' She ordered. He looked stunned so she purred a 'Please?'

How could he deny it? So he did what she said.

And the look on her face was so fiery that he vowed to remember it afterwards. And he did. As he did remember how over the top she got when he touched himself. For that he got a perfect cat's purr. And he would remember it years from now, when she was pissed off because he forgot to pick up the dry cleaners and he would melt her down by absently touching his aroused dick in front of her eyes.

'Ah, do that again, *Darling*.' Darcy asked.

'What?' She said without being able to look up at his face.

'Meow for me.' He was impossibly sexy asking that.

She looked puzzled but it clicked when she caught a glimpse of his lopsided smile. 'You know what to do, then.'

'This?' He caressed himself again and took agonizingly slow steps closer, savoring her purrs and kneeling between her legs. 'What a view I've got from my bed. Yet I know I can improve it. May I?' He asked in a low voice, she nodded. There went the drenched yellow panties.

He touched her mini *C-section* scar: 'Kids?'

'Surgery.' She answered simply, not allowing anything sad get in her way, not now of all times.

Smiling between hot kisses, she asked: 'How many *country chits* have you already made purr for you during barbecues?'

'None.'

'Mmmm...' Long pause due to occupied lips. 'And how many women have you bedded on the second time you met them?'

'A few.' Darcy touched their groins, needing a moment to calm after the wet sensation he got. He was almost out of himself. And the moans, "*Ah, the moans this woman releases...*" He wouldn't be able to forget them any time soon. 'How many incredibly sexy women I've tried hard to meet again casually without her realizing of my secret planning? Just one.' And he took a long breath after a long speech on these desperate times.

'Can I tell you a secret?' She whispered on his ear.

'Do.' Darcy was beyond himself.

'I knew.' She smiled wickedly.

'So my answer is none.' Darcy was surprised, but too busy to wonder about that now. He kissed, and enjoyed her boobs. 'And you came anyway.'

'Incredibly sexy man plotting to get me here has an amazing pull.' Lizzy purred.

'Like this?' And he took a good hold of her left thigh and pulled her down from the pillow so she was completely under his power and the will of his hands.

'Yes!' She gasped.

He chuckled.

'Will?' She paused until Darcy looked at her eyes. 'Fingerfuck me.'

Since *prep school* girls and the *scoring board* on Thorn's room wall Darcy hadn't heard '*fingerfuck*'. And amazingly, it made him loose a drop.

'You're bringing me back to high school.' He whispered in her ear as he embraced her with his left arm behind her shoulder blades and let his right hand free to touch her. 'Only you're lucky I'm a bit more skilled now.'

When she could get some air inside her lungs she managed to say a faint: 'And you're lucky I'm over eighteen!'

He chuckled, amazed and proud of his effect on her and added, before effectively clamping her mouth shut with his: 'And just as horny.'

Suddenly he had two long fingers caressing her and she had it. From now on there was no return. 'Condom. Now.'

'Oh no, I'm enjoying too much what I'm doing to you.' Darcy said, smiling smugly and devastatingly handsome.

She grabbed his hard on, pulled and massaged his head.

Darcy winced. 'Yes, mam.' He got the message crystal clear.

Instantly he was on his feet again but this time she could not gather enough wit to admire. She was busy enjoying the feel of it all and keeping memories at bay, any memories. No thinking needed now. In a millisecond he was done, poised back between her legs and kissing her. She locked his waist with a tightening leg drive and brought him closer until his tip touched her pussy.

'Now fuck me good, Will.' Lizzy asked.

He dove in and stopped for good measure. "*Perfect, perfect, warm, wet, snug, perfect.*"

'A good fuck coming up, madam.' Darcy mumbled.

And it was a very good fuck. When he sensed a hint of what she liked he went for it fast and furious, afraid to let go before her. Even remembering his ex wasn't enough to calm him anymore, he envisioned himself kicking anyone out of this sexy haven when he tried. It didn't last very long; they were both too aroused for it to last.

And then Lizzy was straining her neck and purring. He thrust once more, two, four times and saw stars.

A few moments later, a bit rebuilt, she did a kegel and he groaned. She smiled and did some more just to hear his adorable groan. "*Wow, what a ride!*" She marveled. "*Who is this Lizzy, dirty talker, inhibited and jumping to an unknown man's bed? With a party going on outside?*"

'You're bossy.' He said throatily.

'And am I the first on this too?' She raised an eyebrow defiantly.

'The first I like.' He replied and made to move out. She moved with him.

'One can get addicted to all this flattery.' She said kissing his neck.

'Do.' He simply answered. He tried to move out again, just to make sure he understood what she wanted and she did it again. "*Damn. Round two, inside? Fuck me.*" He thought.

He smiled at her.

'This smile is ice melting. You've been told that too, right?' Lizzy purred.

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‘I guarantee you that’s a first too.’ And he thrust very slowly just to confirm his impression, secretly wishing it was true. “*Damn hot.*” Darcy thought.

She moaned, his smile broadened. She sucked his neck and forced and twisted until she could turn them over. Still connected, now she was on top. She moved to his mouth and then held the wall over the bed post giving him a glorious view of her breasts.

Her moves took some tries to get a rhythm but with his help, the feel was splendid. They both moaned and whispered ‘*more*’ and ‘*faster*’ together. On the frenzy of it, he lifted his head to reach her mouth; she got a hold of his hair, pulled him to a seating position and leaned back so she could watch him move in and out of her. That made her hotter and him crazy.

‘Do you like to watch?’ Darcy asked.

She reached down and touched the connecting spot to feel the moving and nodded. ‘And touch, do you?’

‘Lizzy....’ He groaned, absolutely beyond words, mesmerized and excited to the limit.

And even though this time it was slower, it was extremely hot.

When they finally separated, he had to get up to clean himself. Coming back to bed, he lied beside her and kissed her shoulder. ‘Are we in any risk?’

This book is available for purchase on [ebook](#), [kindle](#) and [paperback](#).

CHAPTER 3

‘Risk?’ Lizzy asked, confused. After this awe-inspiring... *encounter* she could just be quiet and enjoy the warm aftershocks.

‘Hot woman, two rounds, one condom.’ Darcy said with a crooked smile.

‘Pregnancy?’ Lizzy raised both brows, surprised. ‘No, just passed the danger week.’ “*Like we would be in danger anyway...*” Lizzy thought bitterly. ‘And I have a clean record.’ She added, pushing bitter thoughts away.

‘Likewise.’ Darcy was still smiling, but added seriously. ‘It’s been a while, really.’

‘Likewise.’ Lizzy grew silent enjoying his warm proximity, but curiosity won. ‘Then why the new box of condoms?’ She asked with a raised brow.

‘A *closed* box.’ He answered, emphasizing *closed*. He leaned to kiss her mouth, and cheek, eye lids, brow. She purred and he hugged her.

‘Husband, boyfriend?’ Darcy asked her.

‘No, no.’ She answered and he nodded because he already knew, he had investigated her. ‘Girlfriend, wife?’ Lizzy asked and panicked for a split second.

‘None.’ “*Thank Heaven.*” He thought, and smiled sexily.

A double ping sounded from the bathroom. Lost on each other’s eyes, between kisses, they didn’t register that this beep could be for them, although it sounded loud and clear. And it beeped again, bringing them back from their cocoon.

Lizzy startled: ‘My phone!’ and jumped from bed, leaving Darcy bereft and wanting to yell for her to come back.

She came from the bathroom and leaned on its door, naked and sexed up, scanning her phone. Darcy perched on the pillows to look at her, crossing his arms behind his head. He didn’t know what they would do now, but admiring her figure was enticement enough for him.

‘Mmmm, Dennie texted.’ Lizzy said, frowning at her phone. ‘She’s wondering where I am. I’d better go.’ She said not really expecting his response, but sounding sweet enough for him to protest if he wanted. Careful not to damage her phone or bag that had been neglected on the bathroom floor, she left them on his dresser before smiling at him awkwardly, fetching her panties from the floor and closing the bathroom door behind her. She had just realized her nakedness and felt silly for being embarrassed after what had just happened between them.

Darcy wasn’t aware he almost had the opportunity to tell her not to go. Maybe she really didn’t give it to him. But he was already on cloud nine as it was. His mind pleasantly hazed, he smiled lazily to himself.

When he agreed to spend these vacations with his longtime friends he just expected to take a break from his responsibilities at Darcy Inc., since the mergers he started a year ago were practically concluded. Financially, it meant his bank balance grew considerably; and as work usually did, it also meant another emotional hideaway.

He couldn’t believe his luck on finding this sexy woman who now was in the bathroom and almost flying the coop. This thought woke him up from his daydreaming and he decided to take action. He wouldn’t mind keeping in touch with her, but it would be best if he could do it directly, without *in between*s.

During these last two weeks since he first met her, Darcy had to go great lengths to find something about Lizzy, and the results were meager. He wouldn’t ask just anyone and risk having the *Holy Inquisition* to answer to, although what he tried was as frustrating as it could be. After the guys made him acknowledge that he liked her at the fishing trip, he decided to reach out for Lizzy asking Thorn to ask Charlo – of all people. Darcy could never have known that Charlo was *Napoleon* on the ‘*Save Elizabeth Bennett Army*’. When Charlo came to Netherfield earlier in the week and they met in person, he made Darcy squirm just to get simple info such as her age, whether she was in a relationship or not, and if she would be back at Meryton before he left.

He thought about asking for her number but dismissed the idea because he wouldn’t want to look needy. He could use his charms and casually ask her while they had lunch together, in a few minutes. She might even offer him her numbers spontaneously, as any other woman he had dated. But she didn’t already, even though she took her phone from the bathroom and left it on his dresser. *His*

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dresser! He smiled wickedly to himself. Lizzy was so sassy in bed, she bought him drinks; she flirted with him and then fled... Obviously she left her phone where he could take it! *Fate* had brought him a *temptress!* Darcy could not believe his *good, good luck!*

She wanted him to hack into her phone, and of course he would oblige. He grinned to himself. During lunch he could come up with some excuse to make her call him so she would find out that he had done what she had expected him to do and, one thing leading to another... Darcy was already sizzling with just the thought of a night with this beautiful siren. He didn't want this encounter to end. He justified himself with the certainty that he wouldn't browse her data in details – that would be a horrible crime - he would just get her contacts. Darcy had one more second to hesitate, then jumped and took her phone.

"Thank God I know how this works." He thought happily, almost shaking in his excitement. Not for one second he thought that Lizzy might actually *not want* his contacts, or *see him ever again*.

Glad her phone wasn't protected by a password, he took a picture of himself, two actually as the first didn't come out as charming as he wanted, and saved it on her contacts with his cell phone number; house number and e-mail. Then he opened her photo album and luckily the first was a lovely one of her laughing - judging from her clothes it was from the day they met. He e-mailed it to himself, careful not to browse any more even though he was tempted to, and that gave him her e-address as well. She flushed the toilet so he had to be faster. He cursed the msn *app* she used as it took a while to load, but managed to invite his account. Then he called his cell phone, let it ring twice before ending the call and replaced her phone exactly where she had left it.

When she got out of the bathroom all dressed up, he was sitting in bed still naked and going through *his* phone, making an effort to look inconspicuous.

'Did your phone ring too? Is anyone wondering where *you* are?' She teased, emphasizing 'you' as an effort to hide her worries that her boldness may have been discovered.

'It did, but no one is looking for me.' Darcy would never prevaricate. 'Is it a problem to you if people know we've been together?' Darcy asked.

She hesitated. 'Yes and no. I don't owe explanations to anybody but I don't like to explain myself. Does it make sense?' Lizzy said, arranging her hair in front of the mirror just like her cousin Anne had done so many years before, but her face expression was totally different.

'Yes. No problem with me. It can be our little secret.' He gave her an arch smile that made it more difficult for her to leave.

She came over adjusting her pouch over her shoulder and tossing it to her back as usual, then leaned to kiss his mouth. 'What's little?' She said touching him.

He laughed. She was very saucy and he was enchanted.

'Gotta go, *Hunk*.' She said, ready to leave.

He grabbed her arm and kissed her again, long and hard. 'This fast? What am I to think? You came, took advantage of me, said it's been a while and then you leave me?' He faked a hurt expression.

Lizzy laughed and gave him a quick kiss caressing his cheek.

'Sorry *Hunk*. It really has been a long while for me. You're perfect.' Then she turned to go.

By the door she looked back and admired him for a while before turning the lock and left.

Lizzy could hardly believe herself. She felt alive, empowered and most of all: free.

And *oh so damn* good after two *-two-* grand style orgasms. "*Talk about wobbly legs!*" She smiled to herself.

Never in her life would she think about doing such an impulsive thing! She, who always was everything proper, who got married just after college, was always faithful to her late husband - even in her dreams.

Alone in the green room bathroom, she had had to face the mirror, there was no way to avoid it again. Confident that she could remember his reflex shaving for her ("*Oh dear, shaving for me! So kissable!*"), Lizzy gathered her wits and looked straight ahead. What she saw made her jumpy: she was another person! Happy, cheeks flushed, wait: a hickey under her left breast?...

Lizzy felt like someone just out of the women's magazines Kitty used to read, like a TV show hostess or best-seller character. '*Very modern, well dressed, exquisite taste – That's our heroine for the day: Ladies and gentlemen, Elizabeth Bennett.*' She giggled to herself as she walked the long

bedrooms' corridor, hoping not to be seen coming out of Darcy's room by anyone that might be passing by.

Browsing one of Kitty's magazines, she had read an article saying that men can be turned off by alpha-females. At that thought she had to laugh. And blush, remembering how she behaved, what she said to him. Had she been too sexually aggressive? Would he regret it? *'Who cares? I won't!'* Lizzy thought, self-satisfied.

Having a *hump* with a man she didn't know and would never meet again was just... fantastic. Darcy was gorgeous, charming and so sexy. Perfect. Maybe she didn't pay him enough compliments, she mused.

'Maybe HE didn't pay ME enough compliments either.' She pouted.

And rich, Charlo said he was loaded. She thought that it was a good thing not having exchanged contacts. They would never meet again, probably, and men weren't complex beings with complex thoughts. They just didn't think like a woman did. It was just a sex date for Darcy, he didn't ask for her phone number and she didn't offer. Lizzy was sure she was thinking like a man and avoiding the embarrassment of a phone call that might lead to rejection.

In the elation of her female empowerment, Lizzy arrived back at the hubbub without anyone being the wiser. Lunch was being served and the delicious smell reminded her of how hungry she was. But before rebuilding her energy levels spent on such a fantastic manner, she had to find her friends and share her feat. She smiled wickedly.

After asking around and managing to walk the busy garden, Lizzy found a common friend that told her Dennie was on the front porch. When she finally found Dennie over the crowded party, she didn't even have time to make an excuse – or brag outwardly.

'Been looking for you, Liz! Char's dad has been taken to the hospital, let's run!' Dennie was desperate, on the brink of tears.

'Oh no! What for?' Lizzy was instantly worried.

'My father called me half an hour ago, just when Char found me. He was terrified.' Dennie said in a string of words.

'Calm down, Dennise. Your father called you?'

'Yes, they were having lunch together and Mr. Longborn fell ill so he called 911.' Dennie whined.

'What else did your father say? Does he know what happened?' Lizzy asked trying to sound reassuring.

'He was frantic as always, Liz. I guess it was a heart attack.' Dennie said, livid.

'No! Where is Charlo?' Not waiting for a reasonable answer, Lizzy grabbed Dennie's hand and ran through the crowd towards the parking lot. She was not driving today but surely Dennie was. Lizzy had called her asking for a ride down the lane. That thought brought Darcy back to her mind, but she pushed him aside.

Ricky met them half way and judging from their faces, realized something bad had happened. He opened space for them through the crowd like a body guard, all the way over to the parking lot where Thorn and Bingley were moving the cars. Charlo had already dashed away; in his Bumble bee yellow Camaro, making as much noise as dust.

Lizzy hugged Dennie while they watched the guys maneuver the cars like chess pieces and through her desperation, Dennie found totally unexpected words.

'These guys are really cool, you know. You *oughta* give *Hunk* a chance. It could be good for you.' Dennie was speaking like a zombie, blocking the panic from her system.

'Dennie...' Lizzy started and turned to face her friend, then decided to let it rest. Compared with Mr. Longborn's disease, her *roll in the hay* had no importance whatsoever. She sighed. 'Later. Move!' They climbed into Dennie's car as soon as they guys managed to free it and ran towards town.

Meanwhile, Darcy took his time enjoying her picture and saving all her contacting details to his address list. Now he would be able to reach Lizzy whenever he felt like it, not having to scheme through his friends to reach her friends and so on. Not explaining himself to anyone was perfect for him too.

In the shower, he marveled on how much fun it was. As hot as he fantasized, his *siren* was bossy in a very sexy way and took his commands when he felt like commanding. He had loved to do her

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binding, he concluded. And they laughed together, been playful and cuddled for a bit. Not too much, it was very nice to cuddle for a bit. He tried to remember when was the last time he had so much fun in a *sex date* and sadly concluded that it was a long time ago, before his father introduced him to the family business. “*Careless times, free from duty. All gone now.*” This little vacation was already ending and by Thursday he would be back at the fourteen hours’ work days and empty cold designer house.

Now at least he’d have a way to contact *sexy Lizzy*. Would she care for a visit now and then? Darcy already knew she was single, bad break up he assumed. Boyfriend probably, as there was no wedding band sun mark on her finger. Her friends seemed very protective of her, Charlo - the *discreet* friend even threatened to injure him if he hurt her somehow. Now Darcy understood why her friends cared so much. Lizzy was perfect, as she called him, sexy and hot. He could get very protective of her as well.

When he returned to the party, dressed as he thought she would find sexy, in cargo shorts and black v neck t-shirt, Darcy was decided to offer her a ride home and was not taking *no* for an answer. He wanted to act as her driver until Wednesday morning when she’d go back to Boston and he to Seattle the next day. “*She already made me feel like a teenager, maybe she’ll enjoy making out on the backseat!*” He mused.

To his surprise the party was more tolerable; it seemed half the people had left. He grabbed a beer and spotted Bingley at the same corner of the front porch where he was planning on standing to look for her.

‘Hey, man. We’re not out of beers yet. Is it bad food?’ Darcy asked congenially, gestured around with his bottle and took a gulp. His eyes were busy searching for a mane of wavy chestnut hair with pretty highlights.

‘Ha! No. Excellent T-bone. Have you tried it?’ Bingley said, impressed at Darcy’s good mood.

He shook his head *no*, and realized that actually he was hungry like a wolf. But before he could grab a bite to eat though, Darcy wanted to find Lizzy. As he kept frowning silently while scanning the party, Bingley considered what could have thrown Darcy into a frown after being so sunny earlier, especially when he gave Lizzy a ride.

‘She’s gone, Will.’ Bingley told him.

‘What? When?’ Darcy was surprised by *what* Bingley said, as well as *how* he knew what to say.

‘While you wasted time showering and trying outfits.’ Bingley chuckled. Because Will looked lost, he explained. ‘*Charleston’s* father was hospitalized. Heart attack, I think.’

‘Who?’ Darcy frowned, so frustrated that his stomach hurt.

‘Charlo is a popular guy and as you can see, the news that his father was sick made everyone worry.’

Darcy was still frowning. Bingley misread his displeasure to know that Lizzy had already left without saying goodbye as incomprehension of the guy’s name.

‘Charlo’s name is *Charleston*. That’s why he likes to be called by his nickname.’ Bingley said nonchalantly sipping his beer.

‘Still weird, but better.’ Darcy was displeased, aloof mask in place again, looking at the crowd but not seeing anything anymore. He wouldn’t make a slip and comment anything about Lizzy to anyone.

Bingley chuckled. ‘Remember how much that college guy called *Stace* cursed his mother’s family for giving him such a name?’ He remembered.

‘Yeah.’ And William Darcy was back in his stoic behavior.

Three hours later Darcy was fed and tired of the remaining *country chits* trying to get his attention. He went back to his room and texted Lizzy.

Lizzy reached inside her bag, awkwardly balanced on her lap as she sat on the uncomfortable hospital’s waiting room, and stared at her phone screen not understanding what the blue rectangle said, nor the funny twitch on her stomach.

“*William Darcy SMS: Hi. How’s Charlo’s father? Do you need any help?*”

‘When did I get his number? How?’ She muttered under her breath. His data had to be saved on her contacts’ list or else his name wouldn’t show up, just his number. An *unknown* number.

‘What are you mumbling, Liz?’ Dennie asked, calmer since they arrived at the hospital.

‘Was it you, Dennie?’ Lizzy asked, squinting in disgust.

‘Huh?’ Dennie asked, confused.

She hit the home button to light up the smart phone’s screen and show Dennie the text.

‘Aw, how cute...’ Dennie cooed.

‘Was it you that saved his number here?’ Lizzy was befuddled by Dennie’s wicked ways, as always. Also as always, Lizzy had jumped to the conclusion that Dennie plotted this situation.

‘No... Don’t give me that look. But I wouldn’t mind having him at my beck and call. Are you going to answer?’ Dennie answered, amused.

‘Don’t know....’ Lizzy bit her lips.

After a few minutes she could not resist anymore.

“ICU. No death threat. How did u get my number?”

Two seconds later.

“Am glad. You need my help?”

Lizzy was curious about how someone managed to save his number on her phone. She surely wasn’t planning on seeing him again. Just the thought of it made her cheeks blaze. And now he was sidestepping her question!

“No, am cool. Ty. HOW?”

He smiled broadly. ‘Darling, don’t you know?’ He said smugly.

“Got to keep my secrets. Let me know if you need me. Big kiss on your lips.”

Lizzy groaned, he was avoiding her question!

“Insufferable man.”

Ricky was passing by Darcy’s door just as Lizzy’s text beeped and as he stuck his head inside, he caught Darcy’s delighted laugh. For Ricky’s arch smile and questioning look, Darcy answered: ‘These vacations are turning out to be just what I needed, Rick. Thanks for making me come.’

‘My pleasure, *General!*’ And he saluted just like he did ever since they were boys, the stoic seven year old bossing the five year old brat around.

This book is available for purchase on [ebook](#), [kindle](#) and [paperback](#).

CHAPTER 4

After a very peaceful night's sleep, where he dreamt of a beautiful temptress with long hair and a delicious mouth, Darcy woke up content, but not actually happy. He'd prefer if the temptress would have made an appearance in his bed, not only in his dreams.

After his textings to her, she hadn't call or sent him any other messages. Thorn only got through to Charlo late that night and Darcy couldn't gather any more information on Lizzy in a situation like this.

A new day beginning, Netherfield farm house was once again in order and Darcy was a man with a mission. He tried to gain as much info on Lizzy as he could from 'Mrs. Hilly'. He didn't like what he learned.

'Oh, you liked our Little *Lizzy Busy*? Wise young man! She's a knock out, isn't she?' Mrs. Hill asked him smiling.

'She's very beautiful.' He tried to sound inconspicuous. Thankfully the old round cheery woman was talkative.

'Lizzy sure needs a fine young man like you; she's been through a rough patch. She married Bill Collins when they graduated from college. They were lovey-dovey for each other since senior high, an item. Never had kids. Everyone was expecting to see dear Lizzy sporting a round belly when they came to visit, every now and then. They lived in Boston, you know. Both worked overseeing companies' stuff. Correcting accounts. She told me once that they were like math teachers!' She laughed. Mrs. Hill talked between coffee sips, all the time busy arranging small things on the kitchen counter.

'Auditors?' Darcy asked, pleased. She worked in his area, finances.

'Yes, I guess.' Mrs. Hill turned serious and stopped her fussing. 'They were married for four no, five years. I catered their wedding. Simple thing at Rosings, his family's farm, lovely place for a wedding on a spring evening.' She sighed, 'Anyway, Bill went on a business trip and didn't come back when he was supposed to. Two weeks later poor Lizzy looked six pounds thinner and his family was threatening to charge her as murderer. Then the police came reporting a car crash and the death of the three men inside. Gossips say that he was cheating on her and got himself killed on the way to visit a *house of ill repute*.' Mrs. Hill shook her head in disapproval. 'I'm not sure. Bill was exasperating but not a fool. Lizzy made him a better man.'

Darcy was silent, staring at his coffee cup. "*Widow?...No one mentioned that before.*" He was surprised. Surely it didn't change the way she rocked his world, but he couldn't help a small stir at the realization that she was not the same as his previous conquests.

Mrs. Hill continued, liking this rich young man's attention: 'It took Lizzy a while to recover. Dennise and Charleston were there all the time to help. Her mother regretted more that Lizzy didn't have any kids to secure Collins' farm than Bill's death. I think that hurt Lizzy a lot. Eventually she recovered and now she's looking beautiful and happy again.'

'When did all this happen?' Darcy asked when he could gather his thoughts.

'Around two years ago. Rough patch for such a dear girl.' Mrs. Hill clicked her lips and shook her head as if condemning Lizzy's fate.

Before Darcy could make more inquiries, Thorn plopped his fat ass on a chair opposite him by the kitchen table mumbling a 'Good morning'.

'Why so low, *Fatty*?' Darcy asked, distracted. Lizzy's story was a heavy blow that caught him unawares.

'Fuck you.' Thorn answered the old nickname he hated and took a sip of the coffee Mrs. Hill brought him. 'Char's gone to Boston with his father. Of course he had to, it's his dad but; you know... I was hoping he would keep bunking here until we left.' He mumbled.

'Has his father's condition worsened?' That information interested Darcy and he perked up. He would have liked to have a private guest as well.

'No. He'll simply need a stents placed and it's best to do it there.' Wretchedly, Thorn again tried to lure the housekeeper as his baby sitter. 'Mrs. Hill, what would it take for you to consider moving to Dallas to baby sit me full time?' Thorn said, tasting the cake she had just served him.

She chuckled. 'You swear too much, Boy!' She smiled. Then sighed and commiserated with Mr. Longborn's disease. 'They are staying at Lizzy's in Boston for a while.' She said eying Darcy, as if continuing their previous conversation.

'If you cook me this cake and that meat loaf twice a week I'll watch my language.' Thorn promised.

'Wait.' Darcy said. 'She's gone too?' It slipped before he could think twice of curbing his interest on Lizzy.

Before Mrs. Hill could elaborate more than 'I guess they're planning to go by noon.' Darcy was out of the kitchen in a flash, heading for his bedroom.

To Thorn, she gushed: 'Bless my heart if I can't recognize a man in love!'

'The more astonishing thing, Mrs. Hill, is to see *Superboring* demonstrating any feelings at all!' Thorn said over his coffee cup, still sad that he had lost Charlo's company.

At that moment, Darcy dashed through the kitchen towards the parking lot with his smart phone and car keys, in time to hear Thorn's comment and yelled: 'Fuck you, *Fatman*!'

'*Ab fab*!' Thorn said and grinned to Mrs. Hill's giggles.

"You need a ride to Boston. Get packed, I'm arriving downtown to pick you up in fifteen."

Darcy texted Lizzy, started his rental, and headed downtown Meryton expecting to get a concordant answer quickly.

Lizzy heard her phone double beep but as she was busy putting Charlo's bag and some bed linens for him on her office sofa, she decided to search for it later. Charlo was at the hospital making the necessary arrangements to make his father as comfortable as possible.

It was very frightening to have someone close deserting you, and Charlo was there for her during that dark month and following hell, so she had to do everything she could for him. It didn't matter how superfluous it might be.

Yesterday, when his dad was stabilized at Meryton's hospital ICU, Lizzy offered Charlo to postpone her trip for a few days but he wouldn't even hear about it. She also called Gardy to let him know that perhaps she wouldn't arrive as scheduled and had to listen to his displeased reluctant agreement. Gardy always knew how to pull her strings, and of course she was guilty for being glad that Charlo's father was going to be just fine after a simple stents placement, and she would be able to keep her travel plans.

She sighed as she walked past her bags, still opened on the living room floor and remembered why she didn't want to attend this barbecue; she was not done packing yet! But it sure was worthy going. Lizzy smiled saucily to herself.

When she finally got to her phone she frowned and took her time answering. Darcy had instantly sent her from saucy to pissed off. He was bossing her! He was just a one night stand and now he owned her? He called the shots? He wasn't even supposed to have her phone number! Neither want to talk to her.

It was twenty five minutes later when she answered:

"No need 4 ur condescension, sir. Already home."

By then, Darcy was settled at the square cafe waiting for her to give directions to her parents' home to pick her up. When he got the message he went furious and called her back on impulse.

Lizzy snorted at his handsome and sexy face that flashed on her phone's screen. 'Huh! Insufferable!' But took the call anyway.

"Hello?" Lizzy said petulantly.

"Condescending? Why? You needed to transport a sick man over a two hundred miles' drive and I rent a comfortable car." Darcy answered, annoyed. He was making an effort to be helpful and attentive to her, and it seemed Lizzy wasn't pleased with it.

"Please! You didn't even offer, you ordered. His doctor arranged for an ambulance. And hello back!" Lizzy spat.

"Hello." Darcy said, self-conscious. "And I did offer. Twice, yesterday." He added bitterly.

She was silent for a second and he was sure she remembered the texting.

"Yeah, you did." Lizzy said softly, feeling foolish for the snapping.

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“When Mrs. Hill told me your friend’s father needed to be transferred to Boston I thought I could help.” Darcy patiently explained and added smugly. “And no need to apologize, Darling.”

“I’m sorry. I jump to conclusions sometimes...” Lizzy said bashful.

“And get defensive.” Darcy wouldn’t say but thought to himself: *“You’re used to defend yourself alone, aren’t you, Darling?”*

“That’s me. Won’t apologize for that.” Lizzy was actually defensive, and remembered the mystery of how Darcy had her number. “Maybe you should.” She spat.

“Excuse me, what?” Darcy asked, confused.

“I don’t remember giving you my phone number.” Lizzy said sternly and he was silent. “And Dennie swears she didn’t either. Not to mention the pic.” She added.

Darcy didn’t say anything. He was very confused. *“Is this part of her flirt? Didn’t she leave her phone for me to look into?”*

“Look, Will, I’m tired.” She said flatly. “We’ve been through very stressful hours since yesterday. And I’m a bit busy with all the things I have to organize before heading back to the hospital. Charlo needs me, his dad is back at the ICU.” Lizzy was really tired and her patience was running thin. She wasn’t sure why this guy was calling her and frankly, she wasn’t even interested in finding out.

Darcy was totally baffled. He didn’t have a clue of what was going on and why Lizzy was giving him the cold shoulder. He was losing control and had to step up, quickly.

“How is he?” He asked, changing subjects and willing his mind to work.

“Char’s dad?” Lizzy sighed. She should have said goodbye and hung up. “Fine I guess, he’ll only need one stents. Doctor says he was lucky to head straight to the hospital when he felt a small pain. Char’s there now with him and I came home to store the Camaro and rest a bit before going over. I doubt Char’s going to let me take his place so he can take a shower but...” Lizzy paused. *“Why are you telling this handsome stranger all this?”* Lizzy asked herself.

“You drove that piece of junk?” Darcy got sidetracked by Charlo’s Camaro, a car so old and loud that they could hear it entering the long Netherfield lane from miles away.

“Hey! Don’t say that!” She had to giggle, it *was* a piece of shit. “Char can kill you for it!”

“So don’t tell him!” Darcy relaxed a little.

“Another little secret, you’re suggesting?” She asked flirtatiously, unable to resist, in spite of her reluctance to talk to him.

Darcy loved it.

“No... According to you, the one we shared is not little at all!” He flirted back.

She laughed and he chuckled. This was the Lizzy he knew.

“Listen, Darling. My flight home is due on Thursday afternoon, so until then, I can help you out. I can come over today or tomorrow morning. Either way is fine for me, you chose.” Darcy couldn’t believe the words leaving his mouth. *“Whoa, did I say that?! Where did that come from?”* One thing was lusty for her, but getting *involved* was very unlike him.

“I’m sure Char will like to hear this, he really likes Thorn. I will tell him and he can call you guys back. He’ll need some company. Dennie’s coming over tomorrow afternoon. But still he’ll be alone from tonight until tomorrow.” Lizzy said everything in a string, barely breathing, and being direct like peeling off a band aid in one single motion. By intentionally misunderstand his offer, she hoped he would get the message.

“Alone, as in the hospital?” Darcy squirmed in his seat.

“Alone, alone. I’m leaving for Europe tonight, for a fortnight.” And she suddenly felt anxious for no reason.

“Europe...” His frustration escalated again. She was slipping through his fingers!

“Yes... perfect timing, right?” Lizzy said, twisting her nose and feeling guilty all over again for leaving Charlo alone at such a moment in his life.

“Mmm.” Darcy made a non-committal sound. He was starting to feel very foolish for chasing after her.

Lizzy got her clue to escape this call once and for all.

“It’s very kind of you guys. Very kind of you. Thank you, you didn’t have to.”

“I know. I wanted to help you.” Darcy said simply.

Weird silent between them for some seconds.

“Well, I guess you really don’t need me after all. May I wish you a safe trip?” Darcy finally concluded.

“Sure, thank you.” Not wanting to be rude and maybe – just maybe -wanting to hear his voice just a bit longer; she tried. “Want a postcard?”

Truly she really didn’t plan to send him anything, she most surely wouldn’t ask for his address, but anyway...

“Nice. From where will I get a picture?” He grimaced to his long forgotten coffee.

“Vienna. And Paris.” Lizzy said in a genuine smile, she had been looking forward to this trip for a long time.

“Ah, we’ll always have Paris.” He quoted the famous movie.

She laughed, and it made him blue.

“Paris it is. Everyone have to love Paris.” Lizzy declared solemnly.

“Bossy.” Darcy stated in a low voice, more to his own regret than for her to hear.

“You like it, remember?” Lizzy asked in a flirt. It was hard to resist, after this call he would never try to talk to her again, she was sure, so why not?

“I may have to change my mind.” Darcy mumbled.

Another laugh and he heard her doorbell ringing.

“Have to go, Will. Thank you again.” Lizzy said in a tone that bore no argument.

“Whenever. *Haben Einen Schönen Urlaub.*” He told her, not offering any argument. Darcy recognized his defeat. She escaped him.

“*Danke.*” Lizzy said and hung up before she heard his final reply.

“*A kiss.*” Darcy said to no one. “*On your lips.*” He added to himself, afraid to say it out loud.

That didn’t go as well as he had expected. She disconnected before he said his last words. That’s exactly how he felt: disconnected.

For the rest of his days in Meryton, Darcy remained on the porch with a beer in hand and sunglasses, looking ahead and thinking how it could have been different if Lizzy hadn’t left. He really wanted more *Lizzy time*, more time in her bed.

‘Fuck, I never liked Paris.’ Darcy mumbled to himself.

CHAPTER 5

Lizzy was exhausted. Gardy wanted them to enjoy their last day together to the fullest and now she was finally installed on her coach seat for the overnight flight returning home. She closed her eyes and smiled letting the warm feeling of love wash over her.

Gardy always had healing powers over her. In his youth, he had had a friend who joined an exchange year program in Meryton and he spent the summer visiting. With Lizzy it hadn't been friendship at first sight though. Thirteen year old Lizzy thought Hans Gardiner too serious for his own good and he thought her too boisterous, like she could eat him alive. An Austrian fifteen years old teenager, he was intimidated by her archness.

But, during the next school year, she ended up needing his help on a school paper research and they started to exchange letters. It was then that their friendship blossomed.

They switched to emails, and then texting and messaging as communications evolved. Being about the same age, they kept track of the friendship but hardly saw each other in person. When he married, he honeymooned in New York and she had lunch with Gardy and his wife one day; although she did spend the weekend in NY but didn't want to impose on the newlyweds. She got married to Bill Collins soon after but he couldn't come to the wedding because he had a newborn by then. Bill never understood their friendship, nor did Gardy's wife, Dennie or Charlo for that matter. Charlo always made fun of her using his name, just to get under Lizzy's skin, chanting: '*Lizzys Hans ist ein Prahlhans*'. Lizzy answered that he was not a show-off.

In time they moved to love - platonic but love. They supported each other through rough patches in their lives over the years, and each one always considered the other's opinion before big decisions.

When Lizzy went through *hell on Earth*, Gardy stepped in. Almost a year after Bill's death, Lizzy was on her workaholic state, having a hard time rising through. During their third call that week, she apathetically whined about work for half an hour when Gardy ordered her to stop.

"Open your damn closet, throw some clothes into a bag and take a cab to the airport. I'll be at the arrivals gate in twelve hours waiting for you. Don't make me waste my fucking time." Gardy ordered her in a stern voice that bore no arguments. Well, no arguments to anyone except Lizzy.

"I can't, Love. Work and the settlement papers and..." She meant to restart her whining and he wouldn't be able to keep listening to it any longer.

"*Verdammt*, Lizzy. GO!" Gardy was adamant.

"Cute but..." Lizzy tried to talk but he wouldn't let her keep torturing herself. And her friends.

"GO!" By then he was almost yelling.

"Don't be r..." Gardy could recognize that Lizzy was beginning to be annoyed by his tone, but he didn't let her finish her sentence.

"Listen; don't make me come over to Boston so I can drag you here. Now, *Schätzchen*." That was an order.

And Gardy disconnected. Twenty minutes later he called to check on Lizzy's packing and said that he'd already bought her the ticket to Vienna. The plane was leaving in three hours and if she didn't take it she would be wasting his kids' milk money. Of course he knew how to work her strings well by then; she felt guilty, kicked and complained. Fifteen hours later she was crying on his shoulder, locked in an endless bear hug.

That was the real turning point. He was very worried about her and kept close watch with Dennie and Charlo. At work, her boss – also Bill's - helped by arranging for a leave of absence and taking care of the deceased's documents. Together they were a *healing team on Lizzy duty*, her personal army, which she pretended not to know about.

Gardy had been to the US on business four months after her '*Vienna seclusion*' - as Lizzy called her stay at his place. She traveled to Los Angeles to keep him company and he was pleased to see that she was closer to the real Lizzy.

It was now five months since LA. He was celebrating his birthday and a promotion, and she was back to being *his* Lizzy. In a crowd! Alone with him, she still showed sadness sometimes but not that much. And he didn't like this *sex date* business, not a bit.

'What?' He yelled, spitting some of his coffee.

‘Shsh! Don’t want everybody to know. Your wife already gives me the stinky eye. Don’t want her to think me a whore.’ Lizzy said barely concealing her smile.

‘She doesn’t give you the eye.’ Gardy said, shaking his head and trying to clean the coffee from his shorts.

‘Blah, blah, blah.’ Lizzy rolled her eyes.

‘Maybe she’s just unhappy. I asked for a special birthday gift this year.’ Gardy said grinning.

‘Oh dear! Don’t tell me any porn if you don’t want to hear it back!’ Lizzy said, amused and proud that she *did* have a *little secret* of her own.

He had to blink several times to shoo the images of *his Lizzy doing a man*. Another man, not himself. His wife, her former husband, it would be ok. Other than that, the image of either of them having other people felt like cheating. If not for their *Eros love* for their spouses, they should share love only with each other – even if *Philae love*.

‘No, naughty mind.’ Gardy finally said and she smiled from ear to ear. He had to smile back. ‘I asked for some time alone.’ He added.

‘Ouch!’ Lizzy flinched and sipped her own coffee.

He grinned.

‘*Hanswurst!*’ She teased.

‘*Hanswurst!*’ Gardy repeated. It was an old silly joke using his name, but they still found funny. He continued: ‘I need some time to relax and sleep without worrying about school schedules, groceries or dog food before I start as one of the vice presidents.’ He said, feeling a mix of exhaustion from his daily routine and excitement for his promotion.

‘And she agreed? What an angel!’ Lizzy teased.

‘It took me some effort...’ Gardy said, raising his brows and smiling.

‘Porn coming?’ Lizzy asked, looking at him sideways and raising one brow.

He laughed. ‘Some... She can understand my plea, she works just as much. And I think she’ll ask for some time alone too!’

Lizzy nodded and he took a sip of his coffee before continuing. ‘What was worst was convincing her that this time I was asking for was with you.’ He said and waited for her reaction.

Lizzy looked surprised, eyes opened wide and tight lips. Then she opened a big smile.

‘And?’ She asked, expectantly.

‘And we have Paris for four days!’ Gardy said, grinning like a toddler on Christmas.

She squealed and looked from side to side on his flat’s balcony to check if his wife was close by before jumping from her seat and installing herself on his lap. Gardy always loved and feared Lizzy’s impetuosity. After making sure they were alone, he let her kiss his forehead. He laughed and gave her a quick peck on the lips before she jumped from his lap as fast she had come.

‘So, one night stand with a man you met two weeks before, my kinky friend?’ Gardy asked, incredulous, returning to their previous topic of conversation and Lizzy laughed.

‘Twelve days!’ Lizzy said grinning.

Before he could comment, one of his kids came howling about a TV cartoon and he shrugged saying: ‘We’ll always have Paris!’

That was just one of the times Darcy intruded on her vacations. It seemed he was constantly there with her: whenever she passed a postcard stand, a Mexican restaurant, a man laughing on the street that had a similar rich voice, a window shop offering v necked t-shirts, a Sol beer add.

Two weeks later, during Gardy’s birthday party, to escape an obnoxious mustached work friend of his, Lizzy decided to take a walk at the lovely square in front of the restaurant. This sojourn with Gardy’s family was so lovely, his wife and kids were making an effort to make her feel welcomed, and they succeeded as always. Lizzy took this time away from her life to gather her strength and put her life definitively back on track.

Lizzy was following the self-aid steps to *clear the clutter* and *reorganize life patterns*, she was finally able to reflect on her habits and goals. Smiling to herself, she thought that ‘*growing new relationships*’ step was not difficult... the memory of her bold encounter with Darcy during the 4th of July barbecue still made her blush, and if she was being honest to herself, it still made her insides warm.

The fact that he had her phone number was still a mystery to her. Somehow his picture, e-mail address and phone numbers were loaded into her phone. She puzzled over it every now and then,

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thinking that some *transferring app* could have sent his data to her. He didn't call again as she knew he wouldn't after she had dismissed him, so she let it rest. But didn't delete him from her phone: if he stayed still she could keep his data as a memento of her courage.

She chose a bench under a flowery arch at the lovely square and checked her e-mails.

'Oh, what a surprise!' She smiled to herself, shaking her head. *'Unbelievable.'*

From: wd@darcyinc.com

To: elizabeth@hertfordshire.com

Subject:

Hi there!

My grand Dane Brutus rudely chased the mailman last week.

Maybe that's why no postcards arrived yet.

Talked to Thorn and Charlo's father is already home.

Try the Salud Cantina on Johannesgasse, great taco.

Yours, Will

She had to laugh, albeit bitterly. *"My e-mail too? What else William Darcy?"* But butterflies did a happy dance in her stomach.

From: elizabeth@hertfordshire.com

To: wd@darcyinc.com

Subject: *Re:*

My e-mail too? Do I need a restraining order?

After hitting 'send', she returned to the party and checked her e-mails very ten minutes or so. Half an hour later, she got an answer.

From: wd@darcyinc.com

To: elizabeth@hertfordshire.com

Subject: *Re:Re:*

Why would you need one?

NOW you need my help, when you are this far away?

Will

'Ok, that's kinda funny...' Lizzy said to herself, smiling. Like he doesn't know...

It took her some time to weigh the implications of keeping in touch with this hot man. Maybe a casual relationship wouldn't be a problem. He made her feel so good... Lizzy decided to give it a try.

She caught Gardy's eye after some effort and mouthed a *'Be right back.'* to his boozed happy nod. Spotting a souvenirs shop at the other side of the square she darted over and chose a beautiful postcard. She paid and photographed it, opened her mail browser and hit reply:

From: elizabeth@hertfordshire.com

To: wd@darcyinc.com

Subject: *Re: Re: Re:*

Here it goes! Don't let Brutus near your computer! :D

I should have expected you would intrude on my e-address...

I know about Char's dad. We've been talking daily. Thank God he's ok.

No time for a Viennese taco, as I leave for Paris in the morning, but thanks for the tip. Maybe you could find one at home?

Sacher flavored kiss

L

PS.: Couldn't Brutus be a Dachshund? You know what they say: Small secrets, tiny.... Dogs? ;)

She bit her lip and hesitated, then attached the postcard photo and hit send.

For the rest of the night, Lizzy kept checking her mailbox but there was no answer. Then the dinner party came to a close.

Darcy only saw her answer over his lunch break three hours later, when his assistant Arthur Reynolds placed a sandwich on his desk. He opened the attached photo expecting to find *Stephansdom*, but to his surprise it was a beautiful *Klimt*, the *Egyptian woman*. He smiled and this smile turned to a laugh when he read the dog remark.

‘Brutus matches, Darling!’ He talked to himself.

He had to read it again, as the first time he was too eager to understand the *Sacher torte kiss*.

“*Damn, almost midnight in Vienna.*” Darcy muttered, checking the clock and calculating the time zones. He had to answer anyway, and hoped she would be up late.

From: wd@darcyinc.com

To: elizabeth@hertfordshire.com

Subject: Re:Re:Re:

Postcard arrived safely, thank you. Very original, a Klimt!

I'm sorry to disappoint you, but Brutus is huge! Not very subtle, I'm afraid.

In Paris, may I suggest a Pita Grecque? Not very fancy but it compensates in taste.

I prefer Greek food to French, and Athens to Paris, so I'm fond of Gyro's. The same with Sacher torte, I loved it when I first tasted.

I hope you're enjoying your vacation.

I'll send for a very French pastry here.

Kiss, Will

Later, when he was driving home it dawned on him.

‘She invited me to a dinner date in Boston!’ Darcy raised his voice in surprise alone in his car.

He nearly crashed into the car in front of him when it suddenly stopped on a red light, astonished as to how he could have let her invitation pass.

As soon as he got home, kicked off his shoes in his study and got himself a beer, he sent her another mail.

From: wd@darcyinc.com

To: elizabeth@hertfordshire.com

Subject: Something more appealing

We can try something new. How about a pita bread pizza on Washington Av?

It goes great with beer.

Does it sound appealing?

Will

By the next day, Lizzy only had time to check her mails after she and Gardy were settled on their hotel in Paris. Although instantly happy to find two replies, Lizzy took a pause to think before answering though. Seattle was in the middle of the night anyway, Darcy would only read her answer when he woke up and she had to decide what to answer. Depending on her next words, she would be accepting a second date. “*Yikes!*” she thought to herself.

Later that night, while Gardy was already asleep true to his intension of sleeping as much as he could, Lizzy chatted with Dennie and Char on line. They often did conference messagings and it was funny because they sounded drunken, jumping from one subject to another. They talked about everything at the same time and suddenly, when Lizzy was trying to keep up with a complicated discussion over Thorn's ability to hold a grudge, Darcy showed up on her messenger.

Wd: Bonsoir

Lizzybee: am all astonishment

Wd: Pardon?

Lizzybee: how?

Wd: I learned French years ago

Lizzybee: ?

Lizzybee: no, how did u get my msn account?

Wd: I have my sources...

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And then Lizzy had a revelation as a SMS from Kitty asking her to bring one more t-shirt blinked on her screen. She was astonished.

Lizzybee: *my phone! You hacked into my smart phone!*

Wd: *guilty as charged!*

Darcy was smug.

Lizzybee: *when? Oh, the green room of course*

Wd: *I was busy then*

Lizzybee: *not when I was in the bathroom*

Lizzybee: *insufferable man*

Wd: *that's a good thing, right?*

Lizzybee: *=/*

Lizzy was displeased, he had invaded her privacy. She still wasn't sure she wanted to see him again and by obnoxiously contacting her, he wasn't giving her the chance to decide.

Lizzybee: *that's a felony, you know. I could report u*

Wd: *come on*

Lizzybee: *that's invasion of privacy. I really should sue u*

Wd: *you mean you didn't want me to?*

Lizzybee: *WHAT???*

Wd: *Lizzy, be serious*

Darcy was starting to second guess his actions for the first time. He was sure she had meant for him to get her number directly from her phone. In a millisecond he revisited the events of that delightful afternoon, but his arrogance only let him see her sexy teasing.

Lizzybee: *you thought I WANTED you to hack my phone? Why would I want that?*

Lizzybee: *IF I wanted to give you my contacts I would have.*

Lizzybee: *and I didn't!*

'Fuck, fuck, fuck!' Darcy could feel his cheeks and neck burn from embarrassment. He completely misread her signals. If she wasn't planning on giving him her number, than he... 'Fuck, fuck, fuck.' He mumbled, horrified with what he did.

Wd: *I apologize, Elizabeth. After our passionate encounter I thought you'd want to give me your number. I apologize. I was going to ask for your numbers and give you mine anyway*

Lizzybee: *But you DIDN'T ASK!*

Wd: *Again I apologize. As you left your phone in the room when you went to the bathroom, I thought that was what you wanted. A tease, I mean. You're very accomplished in teasing, Darling*

Lizzybee: *tease???? OMG*

Wd: *I planned to have lunch with you and find some excuse to let you know I got your number as I thought you wanted me to*

Wd: *You ended up leaving before we said goodbye and...*

Lizzybee: *Holy shit! NOW it's MY fault?*

Wd: *I'm sorry. Darling, my instincts were hazed, you bewitched me. My mind stopped working properly.*

As she didn't reply immediately, Darcy thought that he might have a chance to clean his act, for the time being. 'How the hell could I have made such a fool of myself...' He shook his head, still not believing his stupidity. He could call her but it was late in Paris. She was awake but... 'Fuck! Fuck!' He kicked himself, deciding that he had to guarantee a chance to apologize to her in person when she had simmered.

Wd: *I already told you about your effect on me. You undo me. Really. And I'm not drunk today. Or tipsy.*

Lizzy sighed, remembering she promised herself all those months ago that she was not going to be angry all the time anymore. She was not going back to raising walls around her, blocking everybody. He was gorgeous and was making an effort. But what the heck? Her privacy?

Lizzybee: *look, I didn't like it, but I don't need to be rude. Sorry.*

Wd: *don't apologize, darling*

Lizzybee: *??*

Wd: *let ME apologize over dinner. Can I wine and dine you?*

Lizzybee: *sounds kinky*

Wd: *can I????*

Lizzybee: *naughty wd...*

Charlo and Dennie only noticed that Lizzy went silent on the conversation when they teased her about Darcy and she didn't answer. After a week in Vienna reevaluating her healing process; she arrived at the conclusion that Darcy could really be good for her, like Charlo and Dennie kept repeating to her. Only when she got to that realization, she told them what happened on the phone, a week ago. And they have been discussing her interlude ever since.

Ladyboy: *where the fr u?*

WonderD: *We've been asking you bout hunkty hunk!*

Lizzybee: *with him on another chat. Tell later. u won't believe what he has done!!! >.<*

WonderD: *wooooooooooooo*

Ladyboy: *It's raining men, alleluia*

Charlo and Dennie cheered and teased her, but as always were non-judgmental and supportive. Gardy was very respectful and discreet, Lizzy knew no word would ever leave his mouth. Even to her, unless she brought the subject, he wouldn't talk about touchy subjects.

Lizzy's days of reflection and soul searching had actually worked at Darcy's favor.

Wd: *still there?*

Lizzybee: *y, sorry*

Wd: *so?*

Lizzybee: *maybe. One condition.*

Wd: *anything*

Lizzybee: *sans Brutus*

'Unexpected... Does she mean only a joke or no sex?' Now Darcy was puzzled, remembering her delicious tease about the size of his... dog.

Wd: *nice fella. Sure you want to keep him out?*

'Confused, Hunk? Want some action, huh? Well, lucky day for you. That's all you're gonna get from me.' Lizzy was enjoying this flirting with Darcy.

Lizzybee: *if he promises to BEHAVE and OBEY, quit snooping around my stuff, I suppose I can arrange for a dog house...*

Wd: *it suits him*

Lizzy giggled and Gardy grumbled from his bed.

'Shhh, trying to sleep here.' Gardy complained.

'Sorry.' Lizzy whispered.

Wd: *deal?*

Lizzybee: *y*

Wd: *you said you'd be spending a fortnight in Europe so... next sat, 7pm? Will you be back already?*

Just when he hit send, Darcy realized he sounded eager.

Lizzybee: *y, ok*

Lizzy didn't thought it was a bad thing to have a gorgeous guy like Darcy eager to meet her again, after all.

Lizzybee: *Boston, right?*

Wd: *y!*

Wd: *my hotel?*

Lizzybee: *let me know which one*

Wd: *fine weather in Paris?*

Darcy and Lizzy made small talk about her tour in Europe and discovered a common interest for traveling. They laughed together when Lizzy told him her misadventures with the Gardiner children on a castle's *ghost afternoon* where they had spent the weekend. Although embarrassed about the *hacking fiasco*, Darcy was happy to talk to her again. During the next forty minutes they got to know each other a bit more, being careful to keep the banter light and congenial.

Gardy turned on his bed, rubbing his eyes.

'What are you up to, *Schätzelein*?' Gardy asked sleepily, sending an evil eye to her bed lamp that was still on.

'Just agreed to a date!' Lizzy said.

'Huh?' He asked, confused.

'The *Hunk*, through messaging.' Lizzy explained simply.

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‘You’re chatting on line through your cell phone?’ Gardy was mesmerized at the ability Lizzy had to text on the tiny screen.

‘Yep. Now I’m turning in. Night, Honey!’ Lizzy nodded, said her final goodbyes to Darcy, Charlo and Dennie, turned off her phone and the lamp beside her bed.

‘Night, *Schätzchen*.’ Gardy mumbled and closed his eyes.

Sleep evaded Gardy for a while, he worried about Lizzy and how she was letting herself get involved too quickly with this guy.

As the plane started its cruise, Lizzy dozed off and Darcy intruded her dreams once more. Not a naughty dream this time, she and Darcy were just cuddling in the green room and laughing. When the buzz from the inflight meal woke her up, she felt contented.

Just like drops of rain make a hole in the stone, not by violence but by oft falling, Darcy was gaining space on Lizzy’s mind. The thought of ever seeing him again was so offending two weeks ago, but now that she was on her way home, it gave her a thrill.

‘The greatest oak was once a nut that held its ground’. Lizzy’s granny used to say to her when she wanted to give up some challenge. Darcy was on the way of being the biggest tree on Lizzy’s garden, casting a refreshing shadow all over the place.

Darcy was not as serene. For the last fortnight, he had been having trouble sleeping the night through. He was having wet dreams, a lot of them. One of his favorites involved Lizzy, a dog collar around his neck and a lot of moans. The most frequent one was of them having mad passionate sex on a checkered picnic tablecloth, sun on his butt and on her delicious breasts. He would turn them over so she was on top and the sun would shine through her hair. He would fondle her breast with one hand and hold her waist with another. Then as she lowered to kiss him, he would let his hand wander down her stomach to caress her strawberry. He almost came watching her feel an electric shock, straighten her spine and throw her head back. At that moment the sun passed through her, blinding him and he was left alone, high and dry, awoke in the middle of the night.

‘Better cum when she gets ecstatic.’ He grumbled to himself and went to shower every time it happened.

Friday morning he had to excuse himself from a meeting because of a horrendous checkered tie a director was wearing. An instant hard on in a room full of men couldn’t be good for his professional image.

After he locked himself at his office and calmed himself, Darcy checked his phone. He had already tried calling Lizzy twice since yesterday morning, the day he thought she would arrive. Both times it went directly to her voicemail and he expected a call back. Since he had to keep his phone on mute and in his pocket during meetings, he couldn’t check if she had indeed called back. Before returning to his meeting, he was delighted to find a SMS from her on his screen.

“Home. Tired. Spring time in Paris is lovely, for those who love Paris. Yes, am on for tomorrow. C ya”

“Mmmm, not bad.” She managed to answer his two voicemails and make a joke in less than twenty words. More than fifteen days since he had last seen her, more than two weeks fantasizing their next date. He was so anxious to see her that he could even go this day.

“Fuck this time difference. By the time I get there it’ll be too late. Maybe when I have the keys to her place I could catch a red eye and wake up with her... Wait, her keys? What the fuck? I’m going crazy. Horny crazy.” He shook his head at his thoughts and went back to his meeting.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Moira Bianchi a 30+ years old Brazilian architect who has found a soft spot for Pride and Prejudice's Mr. Darcy. After years reading lovely stories about him and Lizzy, she decided to try writing and loved it.

Now she just can't stop.

This book is available for purchase on [ebook](#), [kindle](#) and [paperback](#).

For more of these Darcy and Lizzy, visit

www.hotriochick.blogspot.com.br